

## Office of Personnel Management

## § 531.602

### § 531.504 Level of performance required for quality step increase.

A quality step increase shall not be required but may be granted only to—

(a) An employee who receives a rating of record at Level 5 (“Outstanding” or equivalent), as defined in part 430, subpart B, of this chapter; or

(b) An employee who, when covered by a performance appraisal program that does not use a Level 5 summary—

(1) Receives a rating of record at the highest summary level used by the program; and

(2) Demonstrates sustained performance of high quality significantly above that expected at the “Fully Successful” level in the type of position concerned, as determined under performance-related criteria established by the agency.

[60 FR 43948, Aug. 23, 1995]

### § 531.505 Restrictions on granting quality step increases.

As provided by 5 U.S.C. 5336, a quality step increase may not be granted to an employee who has received a quality step increase within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks.

[51 FR 8421, Mar. 11, 1986]

### § 531.506 Effective date of a quality step increase.

The quality step increase should be made effective as soon as practicable after it is approved.

[60 FR 43948, Aug. 23, 1995]

### § 531.507 Agency responsibilities.

(a) Agencies shall maintain and submit to OPM such records as OPM may require.

(b) Agencies shall report quality step increases to the Central Personnel Data File in compliance with instructions in the OPM Operating Manual, FEDERAL WORKFORCE REPORTING SYSTEMS, for sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents.

[60 FR 43948, Aug. 23, 1995]

### § 531.508 Evaluation of quality step increase authority.

The Office of Personnel Management may evaluate an agency’s use of the

authority to grant quality step increases. The agency shall take any corrective action required by the Office.

[60 FR 43948, Aug. 23, 1995]

## Subpart F—Locality-Based Comparability Payments

SOURCE: 58 FR 69174, Dec. 30, 1993, unless otherwise noted.

EDITORIAL NOTE: Nomenclature changes to subpart F of part 531 appear at 70 FR 31305, May 31, 2005.

### § 531.601 Purpose.

This subpart contains Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations implementing 5 U.S.C. 5304, which authorizes locality payments in defined geographic areas for GS employees and other categories of employees to whom locality payments are extended. These regulations must be read together with 5 U.S.C. 5304.

[70 FR 31302, May 31, 2005]

### § 531.602 Definitions.

In this subpart:

*Continental United States* means the several States and the District of Columbia, but does not include Alaska or Hawaii.

*CSA* means the geographic scope of a Combined Statistical Area, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in OMB Bulletin No. 04-03, plus any areas subsequently added to the CSA by OMB.

*Employee* means—

(1) An employee in a position to which 5 U.S.C. chapter 53, subchapter III, applies and whose official worksite is located in a locality pay area within the continental United States, including a GM employee (as defined in § 531.202); and

(2) An employee in a category of positions described in 5 U.S.C. 5304(h)(1)(A)–(D) for which the President (or designee) has authorized locality-based comparability payments under 5 U.S.C. 5304(h)(2) and whose official worksite is located in a locality pay area.

*General Schedule* or *GS* means the classification and pay system established under 5 U.S.C. chapter 51 and

subchapter III of chapter 53. It also refers to the pay schedule of GS rates established under 5 U.S.C. 5332, as adjusted under 5 U.S.C. 5303 or other law (including GS rates payable to GM employees). Law enforcement officers (LEOs) receiving LEO special base rates are covered by the GS classification and pay system, but receive higher base rates of pay in lieu of GS rates at grades GS-3 through GS-10.

*GM employee* has the meaning given that term in 5 CFR 531.203.

*GS rate* means a rate of basic pay within the General Schedule, excluding any LEO special base rate and additional pay of any kind such as locality payments or special rate supplements. A rate payable to a GM employee is considered a GS rate.

*Law enforcement officer* or *LEO* has the meaning given that term in 5 CFR 550.103.

*LEO special base rate* means a special base rate established for GS law enforcement officers at grades GS-3 through GS-10 under section 403 of the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 (section 529 of Pub. L. 101-509, November 5, 1990, as amended) which is used in lieu of a GS rate.

*Locality pay area* means an area listed in § 531.603 of this part, as established and modified under 5 U.S.C. 5304 by the Pay Agent designated by the President under 5 U.S.C. 5304(d)(1).

*Locality payment* means a locality-based comparability payment payable under 5 U.S.C. 5304 and this subpart. An employee's locality payment is the difference between the employee's locality rate and the employee's scheduled annual rate of pay.

*Locality pay percentage* means the percentage authorized for a locality pay area under 5 U.S.C. 5304 or 5304a which is used to compute a locality payment (before applying any maximum pay limitations under § 531.606).

*Locality rate* means a scheduled annual rate of pay plus an applicable locality payment. An employee's locality rate is computed under § 531.604.

*MSA* means the geographic scope of a Metropolitan Statistical Area, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in OMB Bulletin No. 04-03, plus any areas subsequently added to the MSA by OMB.

*Official worksite* means the official location of an employee's position of record as determined under § 531.605.

*Position of record* means an employee's official position (defined by grade, occupational series, employing agency, LEO status, and any other condition that determines coverage under a pay schedule (other than official worksite)), as documented on the employee's most recent Notification of Personnel Action (Standard Form 50 or equivalent) and current position description. A position to which an employee is temporarily detailed is not documented as a position of record. For an employee whose change in official position is followed within 3 workdays by a reduction in force resulting in the employee's separation before he or she is required to report for duty in the new position, the position of record in effect immediately before the position change is deemed to remain the position of record through the date of separation.

*Rate range* or *range* means a range of rates of basic pay for a grade within an established pay schedule, excluding any retained rate. A rate range may consist of GS rates, LEO special base rates, locality rates, special rates, or, for non-GS employees, similar rates under other legal authority.

*Retained rate* means a rate above the maximum rate of the rate range applicable to the employee which is payable under 5 CFR part 536 or similar legal authority.

*Scheduled annual rate of pay* means, as applicable—

(1) The annual GS rate payable to an employee;

(2) An annual LEO special base rate; or

(3) For an employee in a category of positions described in 5 U.S.C. 5304(h)(1)(A)–(D) for which the President (or designee) has authorized locality payments under 5 U.S.C. 5304(h)(2), the annual rate of pay fixed by law or administrative action, exclusive of any locality-based adjustments (including adjustments equivalent to local special rate supplements under 5 CFR part 530, subpart C) or additional pay of any other kind.

*Special rate* means a rate of pay within a special rate schedule established

## Office of Personnel Management

## § 531.603

under 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, or a similar rate established under other legal authority (e.g., 38 U.S.C. 7455). The term *special rate* does not include an LEO special base rate.

*Special rate schedule* means a pay schedule established under 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, to provide higher rates of pay for specified categories of positions or employees at one or more grades or levels or a similar schedule established under other legal authority (e.g., 38 U.S.C. 7455).

*Special rate supplement* means the portion of a special rate paid above an employee's scheduled annual rate of pay. However, for a law enforcement officer receiving an LEO special base rate who is also entitled to a special rate, the special rate supplement equals the portion of the special rate paid above the officer's LEO special base rate. When a special rate schedule covers both LEO positions and other positions, the value of the special rate supplement will be less for law enforcement officers receiving an LEO special base rate (since that rate is higher than the corresponding GS rate). The payable amount of a special rate supplement is subject to the Executive Schedule level IV limitation on special rates, as provided in 5 CFR 530.304(a).

*Telework agreement* means a formal oral or written agreement between a supervisor and an employee to permit the employee to work at an alternative worksite (i.e., telework) instead of the location of the employee's assigned organization.

[58 FR 69174, Dec. 30, 1993, as amended at 59 FR 67605, Dec. 30, 1994; 61 FR 3540, Feb. 1, 1996; 62 FR 25425, May 9, 1997; 64 FR 69173, Dec. 10, 1999; 66 FR 67070, Dec. 28, 2001; 68 FR 19708, Apr. 22, 2003; 69 FR 2050, Jan. 13, 2004; 69 FR 75453, Dec. 17, 2004; 70 FR 31302, May 31, 2005; 70 FR 74995, Dec. 19, 2005; 73 FR 66153, Nov. 7, 2008]

### § 531.603 Locality pay areas.

(a) Locality rates of pay under this subpart shall be payable to employees whose official worksites are located in the locality pay areas listed in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) The following are locality pay areas for the purpose of this subpart:

(1) Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Gainesville, GA-AL—consisting of the At-

lanta-Sandy Springs-Gainesville, GA-AL CSA;

(2) Boston-Worcester-Manchester, MA-NH-RI-ME—consisting of the Boston-Worcester-Manchester, MA-RI-NH CSA, plus Barnstable County, MA, and Berwick, Eliot, Kittery, South Berwick, and York towns in York County, ME;

(3) Buffalo-Niagara-Cattaraugus, NY—consisting of the Buffalo-Niagara-Cattaraugus, NY CSA;

(4) Chicago-Naperville-Michigan City, IL-IN-WI—consisting of the Chicago-Naperville-Michigan City, IL-IN-WI CSA;

(5) Cincinnati-Middletown-Wilmington, OH-KY-IN—consisting of the Cincinnati-Middletown-Wilmington, OH-KY-IN CSA;

(6) Cleveland-Akron-Elyria, OH—consisting of the Cleveland-Akron-Elyria, OH CSA;

(7) Columbus-Marion-Chillicothe, OH—consisting of the Columbus-Marion-Chillicothe, OH CSA;

(8) Dallas-Fort Worth, TX—consisting of the Dallas-Fort Worth, TX CSA;

(9) Dayton-Springfield-Greenville, OH—consisting of the Dayton-Springfield-Greenville, OH CSA;

(10) Denver-Aurora-Boulder, CO—consisting of the Denver-Aurora-Boulder, CO CSA, plus the Ft. Collins-Loveland, CO MSA;

(11) Detroit-Warren-Flint, MI—consisting of the Detroit-Warren-Flint, MI CSA, plus Lenawee County, MI;

(12) Hartford-West Hartford-Willimantic, CT-MA—consisting of the Hartford-West Hartford-Willimantic, CT CSA, plus the Springfield, MA MSA and New London County, CT;

(13) Houston-Baytown-Huntsville, TX—consisting of the Houston-Baytown-Huntsville, TX CSA;

(14) Huntsville-Decatur, AL—consisting of the Huntsville-Decatur, AL CSA;

(15) Indianapolis-Anderson-Columbus, IN—consisting of the Indianapolis-Anderson-Columbus, IN CSA, plus Grant County, IN;

(16) Los Angeles-Long Beach-Riverside, CA—consisting of the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Riverside, CA CSA, plus the Santa Barbara-Santa Maria-